

**Report of Accomplishments
Fiscal Year 2005
Balanced Rock Soil Conservation District
1441 Fillmore St. #A
Twin Falls, ID 83301
733-5380 ext. 3
Rick Rodgers, Chair
Counties Served: Twin Falls and Owyhee
Legislative District(s): 23 and 24**



Function or Conservation District Mission

Officially organized May 22, 1961, the Balanced Rock SCD has remained faithful to its founders' intentions. Working with federal, state and local agencies, sometimes through formal agreements, the District has brought a wide range of technical and financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, homeowners, towns and organizations it represents. Conservation through voluntary participation, initiated by a strong education program, has always been a basic tenet of the Balanced Rock SCD.

Natural Resource Improvements Summary

The Balanced Rock SCD promotes management practices that conserve water and improve water quality with the goal of putting water to beneficial use. The district expanded that vision this year when it helped facilitate an energy conservation project through the federal EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program). Through that project Primo Farms, on the Roseworth Tract, was able to install nearly 2.5 miles of pipeline to take advantage of the natural fall of the land to supply 10 pivots with gravity pressurized water. That saved 70,000 gallons of diesel during the 2005 growing season. Primo Farms received approximately \$300,000 in cost-share through EQIP.

Conservation District Priority #1 — Water Quality

Improving water quality throughout the District remains the top priority. On irrigated lands, the District is helping surface irrigators to convert to sprinkler irrigation systems to reduce irrigation-induced erosion through the EQIP and state RCRDP (Rangeland Conservation and Resource Development Program). Nine EQIP applications were funded which will save 8,640 tons of sediment loss annually. Eight RCRDP loans were approved in Twin Falls County that will save 18,500 tons of soil annually in Twin Falls County.

The District is also partnering with landowners, the Twin Falls Canal Company and Department of Environmental Quality to develop constructed wetlands on strategic irrigation return drains within the District. The District is also providing assistance to the



Marc Elliott begins the process of fusing pipe together. It took a half hour to fuse each joint.



Over 2.5 miles of pipe was laid in the spring of 2005 to provide gravity pressurized water to 10 pivots.

USDA-Agricultural Research Service on a Conservation Effects Assessment Project that is evaluating what impact changing land management practices have had on water quality.

Conservation District Priority #2 — Nutrient Management

Western Twin Falls County is home to approximately 80 dairies. Now that dairies and beef feedlots have nutrient management plans, the District believes the next step is to educate crop farmers who are accepting animal waste about the proper methods for putting this valuable resource to work for them while protecting both surface and ground water quality. Initial planning has begun to host a nutrient management workshop in western Twin Falls County that would target the Mennonite community there.

Conservation District Priority #3 — Energy Conservation

Fuel costs that have nearly doubled in the last few years have made energy conservation a priority for the Balanced Rock SCD. The District sponsored two applications for the energy conservation component of EQIP this year and one was completed (see above).

Information & Education/Public Outreach

Mary Rosen, water quality resource specialist, made presentations at the Castleford Men's and Rotary clubs about the federal 319 grant program and the projects in Twin Falls County funded through that program. The District also printed a brochure to educate the public about Salt Cedar, an invasive plant species that is becoming more prevalent in western Twin Falls County. District supervisors also helped plan a field day to be held at the F-Coulee/Dickinson Pond in August 2005.

Community Collaboration and Coordination

The Balanced Rock SCD has worked with a number of agencies and groups in the past year including: Department of Environmental Quality, Twin Falls Canal Company, Twin Falls County Commission, Castleford Men's Club and Rotary, Castleford FFA, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts, Idaho Soil Conservation Commission and USDA-Agricultural Research Service.

Synopsis of Assistance Coordinate for Constituents with Conservation Partners to plan, design and implement best management practices to protect, enhance and conserve Idaho's renewable natural resources.

Source	Purpose/Benefit	Funded Amount
USDA	General Conservation*	\$793,013
USDA	Ground and Surface Water Conservation*	\$249,120
State	Water Quality*	\$515,197
BLM	Sage Grouse Habitat Improvement	\$1,381
State	District Operations	\$12,996
Twin Falls County	District Operations	\$5,665
Owyhee County	District Operations	\$500
319	Water Quality**	\$310,000

*Twin Falls County as a whole

** Twin Falls County as whole and includes 40 percent local match